

Minutes for the Howard County Commission on Veterans and Military Families

9 November 2017

ATTENDANCE: Jonathan Branch, Wanda Riddle, Robert Lowell, Robert Gillette, Chris Williams, Reginald Avery, Bob Moore, Mike Blum, Howard Mooney GUESTS: John Marshall, Jr., Sally Yates, Chris Yates, Bob Pelletier, Denise Nooe (MDVA), Ed Hall (American Legion Post 156), Robert Berlett (American Legion Post 300)

Meeting was called to order at 1900. Guests were recognized and introduced. Commissioner Chris Williams was welcomed back from his deployment. The October 2017 minutes were reviewed and approved. Motion to approve by Bob Gillette, seconded by Bob Moore. Future commission meeting dates were discussed. The next meeting will be on 7 December at 1830. The meeting will be for 30 minutes, then the commission will have our annual social. Lisa said that she will send out an invite. The affair will be pay as you go. Ed mentioned the American Legion Post in Greenbelt's celebration is also on 7 December. A short discussion followed. The following meetings will be on 4 January, 1 February and 1 March.

Lisa updated the commission regarding the commission brochure. It has been narrowed down to a one-page flyer, and Lisa is the point of contact. The Vet-in-School program was discussed with Howard High as the pilot school. Bob Moore gave an update. Chris and Bob Lowell will be speakers. Ed also offered an update. Lisa also mentioned that the schools will receive a digital Veterans Day Resource Guide to assist in planning future Veterans Day events. Robert also noted that American Legion Post 300 had been approached by Wilde Lake Middle School regarding a veteran presentation. Reg also shared that he has spoken at Oakland Mills Elementary School on Veterans Day.

Bob Moore offered an update regarding the commission budget.. Wanda and Howard offered an update regarding the commission's support of Council Resolution 121-2017, adding veterans to the Equal Business Opportunity program. Howard provided verbal testimony and Bob Moore offered written testimony. Bob Lowell offered an update of the Veterans Treatment Court system, and the possibility of having one here in Howard County.

Bob Gillette offered an update on the Veterans Monument. The Howard County Veterans Foundation is working with a probono accountant to submit paperwork for 501(c)3 status. Bob is also speaking at the Columbia Lakefront for Veterans Day. The pedestal for the site of the monument should be installed by Veterans Day. Goal for raising money is 500-700K. Also Lisa noted that she spoke at the Howard County Chamber of Commerce Veteran Luncheon.

The Commission Community Recognition project was reviewed by Wanda. Wanda and Greg have headed this project. The project was approved by the commission. Bob mentioned that sometimes lifetime achievement awards are named after someone. The suggestion is under review.

An award will be presented to Bill Krause of Mission BBQ at the Leadership Howard County event. It was also noted that the JROTC Service Award was set to be presented at the parade, but time constraints will not permit it so consideration presentation at annual JROTC reception.

Howard talked about the Commission Holiday Party. Spouses and guests are welcome. It is to be held at the Frisco Taphouse on Dobbin Road. Howard mentioned all the activities related to Veterans Day in the county. Wanda made special mention of the Ellicott City Veterans Day Parade. Bob Gillette also mentioned the rededication of the Blue Star Memorial in Ellicott City.

Howard spoke about the Yellow Ribbon tree that Tracy mentioned at the last meeting. Also mentioned by Bob that a monument at the Court House needs to be moved due to the court house being moved. Lisa mentioned a possible fundraiser with a veteran's comedy group (ASAP - Armed Services Arts Partnership) with Jailbreak Brewery as a possible venue. Howard County Veterans Foundation may sponsor this to bring awareness to the future veterans monument.

Lisa and Howard will take training regarding protocols for commission meetings (Open Meetings Training), a requirement by the county.

Denise Nooe from Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs discussed the printed veterans resource guide, which will be discontinued soon and only available online in the future.

John Marshall, guest, asked about connection to any village boards by the commission. Reg was recognized as that liaison.

Lisa mentioned that working with Anne Arundel County on the Veterans Resource Fair is up in the air. Chris thanked the Commission and Vivian Bailey for their kindness and consideration during his deployment to Afghanistan. Howard mentioned the updated Reserved Veteran Parking flier. Lisa also related a feel-good story of her encounter with a homeless veteran outside of the Central Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030.

Submitted by: Jonathan K. Branch